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THE ANNEXATION OF CANADA.

THE future of Canada must necessarily engage the attention of thoughtful minds in the United States. The actual condition of the two nations and their present and future interests and prospects, call for calm and intelligent reflection. Settled, chiefly, by kindred races, each has grown, and continues to grow, rapidly, although under dissimilar institutions; while the large and mutually profitable trade which has for many years been carried on between them bids fair to attain, at no remote period, much greater dimensions. In intelligent circles in the Dominion, French and English, one often hears discussed the question, "Will this Confederation experiment succeed—how long will the Union last?" People, within and without political circles, cannot help speculating as to whether the different provinces, sundered by vast stretches of inhospitable wilderness, rivers, lakes, and mountains, can hold together against the various disintegrating forces at work, including diversities of race, antagonistic interests, and mutual jealousies, which have prevented a close, friendly amalgamation so far, and taxed the ingenuity of the different Canadian governments to preserve a semblance of accord or fraternal feeling. Mere conventional devices and artificial bonds will not stand the pressure of the quiet but potent influences of inclination and self-interest when they steadily operate in any particular direction. The old foggy spirit of unreasoning traditional loyalty has largely died out in Canada, the people taking sensible views of personal duty and national advantage. They are liberal and practical in temper, allowing their feelings and opinions to be mainly molded by the generally controlling consideration of self-interest. Even those who yet pride themselves upon a cordial attachment to British connection, are obliged to admit that a political or a commercial union of the Dominion and the United States could

not but largely increase the prosperity of both. The annexation sentiment prevails most among the young and middle-aged, who have either lived in the Republic or become familiar with the prospect of a future residence therein. The emigration of Canadians, principally young people, French and English, to the United States continues; and though many, after a longer or shorter residence, have returned to their native land, over a million have remained behind. According to Sir Richard Cartwright, more than 100,000 emigrated last year.

It would be highly impolitic on the part of the public men of the United States to manifest indifference to a freer and more extensive trade with over 4,400,000 of a kindred race, living along their own Northern border. Canadian official returns show that, despite the existing artificial wall of hostile tariffs, the Dominion imported from the United States in 1883 \$56,032,333 of merchandise. The addition of the Canadian exports would constitute an international trade of \$100,000,000. The political or commercial union, even, of the two countries opens up a vista of boundless possibilities of mutual gain, when we reflect that during the ten years of the Reciprocity Treaty the trade of Canada with her neighbor trebled, rising to over \$180,000,000. The removal of the wretched fetters which cripple their trade would accomplish wonders for both nations. Even were the Canadian North-west left out of the account, it is my belief, considering the enormous mineral, forest, and agricultural wealth of Old Canada, her contiguity to the Northern States, favorable geographical position, magnificent natural channels of trade, her splendid railway system, immense tracts of virgin soil, and other advantages already turned to considerable account by her sparse and struggling population, that union with such a country, possessing a territory of nearly half a million of square miles, with an enlightened, enterprising, and law-abiding population, should be an object of the most ardent desire to so great a power as the United States.

In order to a proper appreciation of the question of annexation and something like an adequate exhibition of its importance to the United States, I shall state facts and reasons to show that the realization of this project would benefit the Republic as much as, if not more than, its northern neighbor, and could not fail to confer incalculable material and moral advantages upon both.

Few Americans, and, indeed, only a small number of Canadians themselves, have anything like a fair knowledge of the almost illimitable extent and resources of that new Northwestern empire, recently acquired from the Hudson's Bay Company and by political arrangement with the people of British Columbia, which is being opened up by the Canadian Pacific Railway. Till within the last dozen years, few, save the hunter, speculator, or adventurous lumberman, have penetrated its northern and remote districts. But such explorers have exhausted their imaginations and vocabularies in attempts to express the raptures which this region has aroused. Its bewildering extent, soil of phenomenal richness, wonderful natural arteries of communication, numerous coal-beds, bursting through the prairie; its iron and other mines, only a portion of them as yet known; its wealth of game, healthy climate, favorable seasons for agriculture,—all combine to justify the enthusiastic laudation it has elicited. Its extraordinary fertility has caused Americans as well as British and Canadian visitors to style it “the future granary of the world.” The volume of wheat and other cereals obtained, even under the crudest farming, averages about thirty bushels to the acre, as against twenty-five to fifteen, in even good regions, further south and east. The Canadian Pacific Railway will soon effect through communication between tide water on the St. Lawrence and the Rocky Mountains, some three thousand miles, leaving but a gap of less than three hundred miles to complete the connection with the Pacific Ocean, when the North-west will undoubtedly become one of the most important regions of this continent.

The total area of the Dominion amounts to 3,304,381 square miles, at least, allowing 193,355 for Quebec, and about 200,000 for Ontario, according to the contention of her Government; Nova Scotia, 21,731; New Brunswick, 27,322; Manitoba, with her recent additions, over 100,000; British Columbia, 213,000, and the North-west Territory about 2,700,000. This constitutes an enormous, perhaps an embarrassing, heritage for a population not wealthy, and numbering scarcely 4,500,000. The total area of the United States is 3,602,990, not quite 300,000 miles more, but with a population of 50,155,783.

Quebec and Ontario possess large areas of good land, promising mines, and valuable belts of timber, in their newer back

regions, which would afford profitable employment to vast amounts of capital and labor. In Ontario, particularly, much has been done, and with gratifying results, during the last decade, to make the most of her substantial resources. Among the most efficient means resorted to, I might mention good colonization roads, and the construction of railroads through the back country. Many emigrants have thus been induced to settle in Ontario and the newer region further west. If the advantages of Quebec were better known, she would doubtless attract more capital and immigrants; but her rulers have allowed immigration to pass her doors, devoting their means and energies to less profitable undertakings. They have sacrificed large amounts to bring back ("repatriate") French Canadians living in the United States, though with but indifferent success. Official reports state that there are in Quebec over 5,000,000 acres of land available for cultivation, and capable of yielding large crops, and many other resources inviting capital and labor. Ontario has a soil, climate, and population resembling those of New York and Ohio, and an extensive domain fit for settlement and adapted to the growth of various products. The Provincial Bureau of Statistics reported an average yield of fall wheat, for 1883, of twenty-six bushels per acre against sixteen for Ohio, sixteen for Illinois, and nineteen for Kansas; and a larger yield of barley than all the best States, Dakota alone surpassing Ontario by one bushel. As to oats and rye, she ranked among the best States.

The above facts suggest the practicability of astonishing industrial results and provincial growth, with a sufficient volume of capital and intelligent population, devoted to the development of the great natural wealth of the country. The notion that formerly prevailed with most people on both sides of the Atlantic, that Canada was mainly an inhospitable, impracticable region of Arctic climate half the year, is now pretty well exploded. The maritime provinces also enjoy valuable natural advantages in the shape of good land, timber, fisheries, and minerals, including coal.

Now, let us glance at the business done by the colonists. The trade of Canada for 1883 was the largest known, the imports exceeding those of the year previous by nearly \$13,000,000. The exports were \$98,085,804; the imports, \$132,254,022.

The following figures show the revenue and expenditure for the same year: Revenue, \$35,088,336; expenditure, \$28,805,229; surplus, \$7,064,492.

The Government officials report, for 1883, 133,303 immigrants; for 1882, 112,000; and, for 1881, 47,000. Of course great efforts were made the last two years to entice European emigrants, the Canadian Pacific Railway Syndicate and various colonization companies owning lands in the North-west vigorously coöperating with the Government, which spent over half a million with this object, each season. While such details should deeply interest the public of the United States, on grounds of comity and honorable regard for the onward march of that true civilization, in which both nations are already mighty factors, they should naturally excite, in addition, the greatest concern in connection with the extensive business relations which must spring up between them.

From even a brief survey of the great natural advantages of the Dominion, it would be injudicious to exclude the following statements, mainly gathered from official documents: New York is 3040 nautical miles from Liverpool; Montreal but 2783; Quebec, 2645; and Port Nelson, on Hudson's Bay, only 2941, it being within 300 miles of Lake Winnipeg, the center of the vast river systems which drain the entire country between the forty-ninth and fifty-fourth parallels, from the Rocky Mountains to within less than a hundred miles of Lake Superior. Again, going westward, we find the Pacific ports of Canada nearer China and Japan than those of the United States. Japan is 4470 nautical miles from San Francisco; from Buzzard Inlet, near the terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, 4374. That road will cross the Rockies, at the highest point, only some 3646 feet above the ocean level, while the United States railways to San Francisco rise in several places to a height of nearly one and a half miles, and for 1300 miles the Union Pacific is everywhere higher than the loftiest point of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The distance from Japan to Liverpool saved by the Canadian route, as compared with that *via* San Francisco and New York, is 935 miles; but the Canadian route, *via* British Columbia and Port Hudson, Hudson's Bay, would be but 9734 miles, or 2353 less than by the United States. The latter Canadian route, however, could only be used from May till October. These facts and statistics will convince the most prejudiced

or skeptical that the new nation to the north of the Republic, as regards all the elements of national strength, wealth, and independence, has already attained the status of a very respectable power, with every prospect of reaching, ere long, an enviable place among the nations of the earth.

But the lavish expenditure of money by the Canadian Government, of late years, has excited genuine alarm in many quarters. The outlay upon the Canadian Pacific Railway and other public works, last year, mounted to the ominous total of \$14,171,413, over ten millions going to that road. Add to those disbursements the following fresh obligations, incurred last session, to swell the debt of the Dominion, and no one will wonder at the alarm felt: Loan to Canadian Pacific Railway Syndicate, \$30,000,000; Vancouver Island Railway, \$750,000; settlement of provincial debts, \$4,000,000; new railway subsidies, at least \$9,000,000; amounts stated in supplementary estimates, \$1,379,000; total, \$45,129,000. The disbursements in 1868 were \$13,687,928; meantime the population has not grown more than one million. This is one of the most serious grievances of the country, and bodes danger to confederation. But there are others.

The discontent existing in several of the provinces, despite the great expenditure in them, to develop their resources and render their inhabitants contented, loyal citizens, is daily assuming more serious proportions. Only a year or two ago, British Columbia was deafening her sister provinces with the cry of annexation, that demand ceasing only with the rapid construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway from the Pacific coast eastward, at an enormous expense to the Dominion. The disallowance of the Anti-Chinese Bill the other day is another source of dissatisfaction to her. In Manitoba, for some time past, men, in private and in public, have manifested great indignation, threatening secession and annexation in consequence of the Ottawa Government having refused to remove the high duties upon agricultural implements; also on account of the locking-up of Manitoba lands in some cases, and in others the prodigal disposal of them to speculators, with the maintenance of the railway monopoly against the wishes and interests of the settlers.

The province of Quebec has been restless, dissatisfied, and anxious under the heavy debt accumulated of late years. Starting in 1867, free of debt, with a respectable balance to her credit,

her rulers, Conservatives during the whole of the period, except for a few years, from, say, 1875 till 1878, have managed to roll up a debt aggregating, some authorities say, \$11,000,000, and others \$15,000,000. The bulk of the debt was incurred, say the Conservatives, in self-defense, in constructing the new railways on the north shore of the St. Lawrence and Ottawa, from Quebec to the Federal capital, and assisting other railroads designed to encourage the settlement and development of the province. However correct that statement, the debt stands out in menacing proportions, a load both irritating and oppressive. But the handling of large amounts, the borrowing and disbursement of millions by a knot of unprincipled politicians and speculators, led to reckless waste and to such scandals generally as convinced the public that vast sums of money were going to the wrong parties — that, in fact, the leading minister and his chums were growing rich at the public expense, and that, if the system were not speedily changed, the province would be thrown into bankruptcy. Leading Conservatives and Liberals alike, in alarm, cried out for a change, which was only effected when the harm was done. The railroads from Quebec to the Federal capital were sold by the *clique*, the Ottawa end to the Canadian Pacific Railway Syndicate and the Quebec Line to the Grand Trunk, both bringing about half their cost, or less than \$8,000,000, and, if report speak truly, enormous commissions to the manipulators. The Premier, to save further mischief to the party and the province, was transferred to the Ottawa Cabinet, leaving a crushing load of scandals and troubles to his successors, one of whom, Mr. Mousseau, quickly succumbed to them. The fate of the present Prime Minister, Mr. Ross, is a matter of some uncertainty. His Cabinet could not have been formed had not the representatives of Quebec in the Federal Legislature obtained the promise of “better terms,” which, indeed, was the condition upon which they voted for the Canadian Pacific Railway loan. The financial balm, or, as Sir Richard Cartwright would call it, the fresh bribe, to Quebec reaches some \$247,000 a year, with which it is hoped she will be able to meet her engagements.

A very serious matter is the dissatisfaction and alarm excited in the province of Ontario, the backbone of the Dominion, by the centralizing policy of Sir John A. Macdonald's administration. Immediately after condemning Federal interference with the license law and other subjects claimed to belong exclusively to

provincial jurisdiction, the Ontario Government induced the Legislature to pass strong resolutions censuring and protesting against the assumption of their railways by the central authority. The provincial government feels strongly on this subject, having disbursed \$8,000,000 in addition to \$10,000,000 spent by the municipalities on those roads. Considering the difficulties between the central and local authorities of late years, it is no wonder that the possibility of a break-up of the Confederation, in the event of further aggression upon Ontario, was menacingly alluded to by ministerial and other speakers. The province of Quebec has also protested against the same centralizing policy, as shown in the passing of the Dominion License Act, last year, and has resolved to disregard such Federal legislation and interference with provincial rights.

These are among the sources of danger to the continuance of confederation, not to mention Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, which, in spite of the late increase of Federal subsidies, are not content. Everybody acknowledges that Canadian disunion, or the secession of any one province, means a powerful impetus to the cause of annexation. Most certainly the French Canadians would hail it to-morrow as infinitely preferable to a legislative union of the provinces, which is one of the pet schemes of the Premier of the Dominion.

Would it not, then, be infinitely better for the Government of the United States to adopt a policy calculated to remove all obstacles to a freer trade between them and the Dominion, which must result, at least, in more extended social intercourse, greater mutual respect and sympathy, as well as in vastly enhanced material benefits? With so many Canadians actually settled in the Republic, and a continued migration thereto from the older provinces, what valuable advantages, present and future, might not be looked for from a union of the two countries? What could be more striking evidence than the facts already set forth, of the value to the world in general, and the Republic in particular, of the magnificent empire stretching from its Northern boundary to the Arctic Ocean and from the Atlantic to the Pacific? Consider the vitalizing, fructifying effects of the great waves of American capital and population which might be directed over that "Great Lone Land"! What might not be predicted of the proper cultivation and development of even a few of its favored localities, with the erasure of artificial boun-

dary lines, and the establishment of advantageous commercial relations with the United States? What splendid opportunities would be afforded to the working classes of both nations—to the hard-pressed toilers of Eastern factories, mines, and foundries, as well as to the cultivators of sterile and worn-out lands—by the rich, virgin territory of the North-west, with a climate capable of invigorating the ague-stricken and enfeebled denizens of the hot and unhealthy latitudes south of the line 45°! And be it remembered that the available first-class land awaiting settlement in the Republic is of no very great extent, and that ere many years it will be all taken up. Surely, in the above facts may be found sufficient reasons for the adoption by the United States Government and people of a policy liberal, statesmanlike, and friendly in character, one of whose main objects should be to “go up and possess the land.” With this country interested in directing a large volume of its capital, and also of its immigration, which reached about three millions in the last five years, to the best sections of Quebec, Ontario, and the North-west, we might look for the building up of a great nation on this continent, insuring the largest prosperity to its inhabitants and the happiest promise to humanity.

P. BENDER.